

EXHIBIT 6

Nanuet church \$5M sale: Hearing shelved amid lack of approvals

Robert Brum, The Journal News

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(Photo: John Meore/The Journal News)

NANUET - A Jewish academy's attempt to get \$5 million in tax-free financing to buy Grace Baptist Church is on hold.

The Rockland Economic Assistance Corp. had scheduled a Jan. 15 public hearing at Clarkstown Town Hall on Ateres Bais Yaakov Academy of Rockland's application to receive tax-exempt bonds to buy the church on Demarest Avenue.

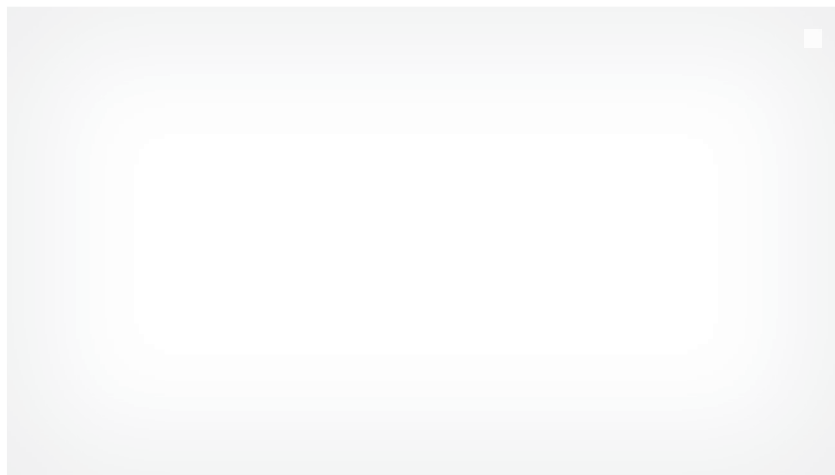
But the hearing was shelved after REAC determined the applicants hadn't yet received preliminary permits and approvals from the Town of Clarkstown, said Steven Porath, executive director of the Rockland County Industrial Development Agency.

The IDA administers REAC, which does not lend money but decides whether a nonprofit can obtain loans at a lower interest rate.

Porath said holding a hearing that was likely to attract hundreds of people didn't make sense at this point.

"It's a little bit like putting the cart before the horse," Porath said. "They have to go through these threshold issues. ... before we even go through the process of a public hearing."

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ant that he would be submitting documents detailing the school's plans, but the town


Ateres' dean, Rabbi Aaron Fink, wants to bring the 300-student girls school now located in New Hempstead to the 2-acre church property off Demarest Avenue.

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The academy's application states the project initially would employ 76 people (47 full time and 29 part time) and create 67 additional jobs over the next seven years.

The sale, placed at between \$4 million and \$5 million, was scheduled to close in January. It is unclear what effect the delay on Ateres' request for tax-free financing would have on that timeline.

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A message left for the Rev. William French, Grace Church's pastor, was not immediately returned Tuesday.

Local opposition

The impending sale has become a flashpoint in the neighborhood along Church Street that is also home to the Nanuet school district.

Residents have packed two meetings at Clarkstown Town Hall, largely to vehemently oppose the sale.

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Grace Baptist Church in Nanuet, photographed on Thursday, November 16, 2017, is up for sale. (Photo: John Meore/The Journal News)

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another seeking to raise money to start a neighborhood association to battle Ateres'

The gofundme page seeks to form a "Greater Nanuet" branch of Citizens United to Protect Our Neighborhoods, which has sprung up in a handful of Rockland communities. ([/story/news/local/rockland/ramapo/2018/11/27/northeast-ramapo-development/2116413002/](https://story/news/local/rockland/ramapo/2018/11/27/northeast-ramapo-development/2116413002/)).

"Nanuet has become united in its efforts to ensure that the sale of the Grace Baptist Church is one that makes sense for the town, its residents, and their children's future," reads the introduction of the gofundme page.

It continues: "The establishment of the Greater Nanuet CUPON will spearhead any legal action needed to guarantee that goal, and also to respond to any future land-use and/or zoning concerns that may occur within our community."

But Fink said he wasn't discouraged by the hearing delay or residents' opposition.

"We're going forward. We always have a backup," he said Tuesday. "We're looking to be good neighbors for a building that had been used for religious education for probably over 100 years.... We're hoping the neighbors will welcome us with open arms."

Ateres' past problems

In October 2017, students were uprooted from 17 trailer classrooms on the New Hempstead campus after Ateres ran into trouble for lacking proper electricity or running water.



Ateres Bais Yaakov Academy (Photo: Kim Redmond)

The school paid Ramapo \$5,000 for holding classes at the town's baseball stadium for 16 days.

Ateres reopened the following month, but was closed again for a week in early January after water from a storage tanker that was being used for drinking, sinks and toilets froze.

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